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# Managing the transition from the Millennium Development Goals to the sustainable development goals: what it will take

## Report of the Secretary-General

*Summary*

The transition from the Millennium Development Goals to the transformative, united and universal post-2015 development agenda integrating the sustainable development goals will be a historic opportunity to advance global development. The present report, provided in response to General Assembly resolutions 61/16 and 68/1, explores what it will take to manage this important transition. It is emphasized that policy integration based on the three dimensions of sustainable development will need to become the new operational standard, supported by a greater emphasis on achieving integration and coherence across actors and sectors. It is suggested that institutions at all levels will need to undertake adaptations to implement the new development agenda, requiring a fundamental shift in mindsets and attitudes accompanied by strong leadership and vision. Emphasis is laid on the importance of ensuring that the efforts of the growing diversity of development actors are effectively aligned with the objectives of the post-2015 development agenda and the underpinning revitalized global partnership for sustainable development. It is also stressed that a multi-tiered and inclusive follow-up and review of implementation will be required to ensure an effective exchange of experiences, advancement of progress and ownership and engagement by all development stakeholders.

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# I. Introduction

1. The adoption by the General Assembly in September 2015 of a unified and universal post-2015 development agenda integrating the sustainable development goals will mark a transformation in the global development paradigm. The agenda's overriding twin objectives will be to eradicate poverty and complete the unfinished business of the Millennium Development Goals while making a transition to and advancing sustainable development. The agenda will bring together poverty eradication and the integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development — economic, social and environmental — into a unified and universal development framework. The agenda will be for all countries, leaving no one behind while protecting the planet.

2. The Millennium Development Goals provided a compelling framework to address the needs of the world's poorest people. Yet the Goals have not encompassed all the issues covered by the conferences and summits that make for a more broad-based, integrated sustainable development. The transition from the Millennium Development Goals to the sustainable development goals will require a clear vision of the implications and preparedness at all levels and among all partners for their implementation.

3. The international community faces a very different set of development challenges at the outset of the post-2015 era than when the United Nations Millennium Declaration was adopted in 2000. The new agenda will be implemented in the context of the growing interdependence of countries and global development action. Globalization and interdependence have opened up remarkable opportunities for development but also extraordinary needs, given that many people have been excluded from their positive impacts. In addition, the world has seen food, energy, financial, health and environmental challenges across countries in the past decade, amplifying global systemic risks. They have had far-reaching consequences for all countries and local communities.

4. In this context, achieving poverty eradication and sustainable development will require significant transformations at all levels. These will include the strengthening of policy integration and coherence, adaptation by institutions, fostering of effective multi-stakeholder partnerships and enhancing follow-up and review of implementation, which are addressed herein.

5. The present report is complemented by the report of the Secretary-General for the 2015 thematic debate of the Economic and Social Council on strengthening and building institutions for policy integration in the post-2015 era (E/2015/69).

# II. Evolution of global development policy from the Millennium Development Goals to the sustainable development goals

6. In the landmark United Nations Millennium Declaration, heads of State and Government affirmed the international community's commitment to several important values, including freedom, equality, solidarity, tolerance, respect for nature and shared responsibility. The subsequently formulated Millennium Development Goals became the key framework for advancing development with the primary emphasis on reducing extreme poverty and improving education and health

outcomes in developing countries. Environmental sustainability is addressed in Goal 7 and Goal 8 encapsulates the concept of a global partnership for development.

7. At the International Conference on Financing for Development, held in Monterrey, Mexico, in 2002, countries recognized the importance of pursuing poverty eradication, sustained economic growth and sustainable development in a coherent manner. In the Monterrey Consensus of the International Conference on Financing for Development, world leaders emphasized that, in an increasingly globalized, interdependent world economy, a holistic approach to the interconnected national, international and systemic challenges of financing for development was essential. They also called for a new partnership between developed and developing countries to realize the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals.

8. At the World Summit on Sustainable Development, in 2002, Governments further defined the concept of sustainable development as comprising three overarching objectives: poverty eradication, changing consumption and production patterns, and managing the natural resource base for economic and social development. A key message of the Summit was that those three objectives would need to be pursued in an integrated manner. Before 2002, the defining moment for sustainable development as a concept and global priority had been the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, known as the Earth Summit, held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in 1992. The Earth Summit emphasized the three dimensions of sustainable development — economic, social and environmental — and resulted in several international instruments that continue to provide the framework for sustainable development policies.

9. The high-level political commitment to sustainable development and the accompanying optimism at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in 1992 notwithstanding, the 1990s and 2000s paradoxically saw the separation, rather than the integration, of the economic, social and environmental pillars that characterized the sustainable development agenda.[1] The special session of the General Assembly to review and appraise the implementation of Agenda 21, held in New York in 1997, and the World Summit on Sustainable Development sought to keep sustainable development on the international development agenda, yet many agree that the implementation of their outcomes generally favoured the environmental dimension more than the other areas of sustainable development. Sustainable development became more synonymous with environmental sustainability than with the broad three-dimensional approach established at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development.

10. At the 2005 World Summit, world leaders committed themselves to the timely and full realization of the Millennium Development Goals, as well as all the international development goals agreed at the major United Nations conferences and summits (see General Assembly resolution 60/1). The Economic and Social Council was entrusted with several new tools to pursue the integrated follow-up and review, including the annual ministerial review and the Development Cooperation Forum.

[1] Kate Higgins and Helen J. Chenard, "Rio+20: what might it mean for international development?" (North-South Institute, June 2012). Available from www.nsi-ins.ca/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/2012-Rio20-what-it-might-mean-for-international-development.pdf.

11. The global financial crisis of 2008 brought to the fore the increasing need for inclusive, collective action, in particular through measures for global macroeconomic policy coordination. The crisis and its aftermath pointed to the increasing interconnectedness of economic and social development issues and the need to address them through global norms and rule setting, such as by the rights-based approach to development and coordination in international trade and development. The threat of climate change to global prosperity and security has also triggered recognition of the need to further strengthen the integration of environmental sustainability into the international development architecture and global action.

12. Taken together, those concerns influenced the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, held in Rio de Janeiro in 2012, on the need to advance poverty eradication within the context of sustainable development. A major achievement of Conference was to bring sustainable development back to the centre of global policymaking. Member States recognized that the world faced a situation where continued and sustained human progress was contingent on their collective ability to reduce economic volatility and address social disparities within and between countries, while simultaneously limiting environmental deterioration.

13. In the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, entitled "The future we want" (General Assembly resolution 66/288, annex), Member States also agreed to strengthen the institutional framework for sustainable development. They called upon the Assembly to further integrate sustainable development as a key element of the overarching framework for United Nations activities. They reaffirmed the role of the Economic and Social Council for policy review, dialogue and recommendations on economic and social development, as well as its key role in achieving a balanced integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development and coordinating the United Nations system (ibid., paras. 82 and 83). In addition, they established the high-level political forum on sustainable development, convened under the auspices of the Assembly and the Council, to provide political leadership and recommendations for sustainable development (ibid., paras. 81-84).

14. The outcome of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development initiated the elaboration of sustainable development goals to be coordinated and coherent with the processes to consider the post-2015 development agenda, which is expected to be adopted at the United Nations summit in September 2015. The agenda is currently being elaborated through informal consultations of the General Assembly.

15. There have been numerous inputs to this process, notably: the set of 17 goals and 169 targets proposed by the Open Working Group of the General Assembly on Sustainable Development Goals (A/68/970 and Corr.1), which will be the main basis for integrating sustainable development goals into the post-2015 development agenda; the report of the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts on Sustainable Development Financing (A/69/315); the General Assembly dialogues on technology facilitation; and other related United Nations intergovernmental processes and events. The Assembly called upon the Secretary-General to synthesize the full range of inputs and present a synthesis report, which has served as a contribution to the intergovernmental negotiations in the lead up to the United Nations summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda (see A/69/700).

# III. Pursuing policy integration for a unified development agenda

## A. Imperatives of policy integration

16. The broadening of the development agenda, including the proposed sustainable development goals, is a significant transformation in global development policy. Actions to achieve poverty eradication and sustainable development are interdependent and require integrated policy responses that maximize opportunities for synergy and balance trade-offs. This is different from the Millennium Development Goals, for which actors generally pursued individual goals independently from one another.

17. The demand for policy integration will grow significantly with the transition to the post-2015 development agenda. Integration is at the core of sustainable development and the proposed sustainable development goals — the economic, social and environmental dimensions will need to be effectively integrated during policy formulation and in implementation. Policy integration will need to be carried out within and across sectors, and supported by policy coordination and coherence among national, regional and global development efforts.

18. In view of the interlinkages between sustainable development objectives, financing strategies should also be designed to use opportunities for synergy while taking account of potential trade-offs. The need for the integration of financing was highlighted by the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts on Sustainable Development Financing.

19. According to analytical studies undertaken for the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, a broad pursuit of sustainable development will perform better in terms of promoting global prosperity and equity while protecting the planet, when compared with a strategy based on achieving single-issue objectives in isolation.

20. For example, policy approaches can be tailored to support the objective of poverty eradication by integrating the three dimensions of sustainable development. In Brazil, the Bolsa Verde programme, for example, addresses the economic, social and environmental dimensions through conditional cash transfers to indigenous and rural households in order to support ecological, sustainable livelihoods in regions that are environmentally sensitive.

21. Similarly, there are synergies among efforts towards expanding education, ensuring gender equality and enhancing women's employment. Women who participate in the workforce have been shown to reinvest their income in improved nutrition, health and education for household members, thus increasing living standards and reducing "non-income poverty". Better nutrition for all family members and reduced infant, child and maternal mortality are among the social gains from integrated employment policies that take into account the gender dimension. Women have also been supportive of more sustainable pathways, such as advocating bans on unsustainable products, better labelling of the environmental impacts of products and their production and showing support for green energy and comprehensive recycling programmes.

22. Policy integration and cooperation in the post-2015 era will also become a more complex undertaking than previously. Achieving sustainable food production,

for example, requires a host of interlinked activities, such as agronomic interventions to boost yields, investment in rural infrastructure, greater efficiency in water use and better choices in allocating additional land to agricultural production. Other similarly complex development challenges, such as sustainable urbanization, biodiversity protection and the shift to low-carbon energy systems, also require integrated policies and approaches.

23. Formulating and implementing integrated policies is also challenging and important for countries emerging from conflict or in vulnerable situations. Policy choices in this context and the competition for productive resources can create tension and lead to prolonged or additional conflicts.

24. Policy integration will also need to be pursued by all actors and stakeholders, public and private, including civil society, academic institutions and the private sector. An important challenge will be to ensure that the efforts of the growing diversity of development actors are effectively aligned to support policy integration, including within a revitalized global partnership for sustainable development. South-South cooperation among Governments has especially come to the fore as a significant force in development, and the number and type of public and private actors involved in development is also likely to continue to grow.

**Integrated responses to global development challenges**

25. In the past decade, the distinction between national and global development challenges has become less distinct as the process of globalization and interconnectedness of countries has accelerated. The world has seen an increasing trend of financial, health and environmental disruptions in one country cascading over national borders and amplified into systemic risks. This has meant that small locales and individuals can become globally significant, just as global events can have major consequences for the most remote locality or community. Information and communications technology, trade and financial transactions are the principal mediums for interconnectedness, giving rise to a new reality of interdependence in today's world.

26. The interdependence of development action means that areas will need to be pursued in combination in an integrated manner, rather than individually or sequentially. For example, the proposed sustainable development goal 1 (End poverty in all forms everywhere), establishes the income level of $1.25 per day as a minimum for everyone, to be accomplished by all countries by 2030, including through social protection systems (target 1.3) as well as global action to enhance the resilience of the poor and those in vulnerable situations and reduce their vulnerability to climate-related extreme events and other economic, social and environmental shocks and disasters (target 1.5). Action to mitigate and adapt to climate change will therefore also be part of realizing goal 1.

27. In the post-2015 development agenda, efforts to realize both common and collective development challenges will become highly integrated. Examples of common development challenges at the country level include the provision of basic services in such areas as education, health, water, sanitation and disability services. Global development challenges, such as climate change impacts, biological diversity loss, ocean conservation and pandemics, affect every country and require collective action.

28. In the pursuit of the post-2015 agenda, the provision of basic needs and the global response to interlinked challenges will need to be advanced simultaneously and in an integrated manner. While continued strong provision of assistance for basic needs will be at the heart of the new agenda, developing countries will also continue to need support to allow them to benefit from globalization or enable them to deal with global collective challenges, including adaptation to climate change.

29. Realizing sustainable development objectives in this new era is therefore also about managing the interdependence of countries and of issues in an integrated manner. Post-2015, policy integration can be expected to play an important role in supporting all countries, in particular developing countries, to benefit from globalization and interdependence as well as to respond effectively to global development challenges.

## B. Advancing policy integration: what it will take

### National level

30. The realization of poverty eradication and sustainable development will require effective mechanisms at all levels to foster policy integration. There are numerous feasible pathways for advancing sustainable development, and measures and policies will need to be tailored to each issue and sector, as well as to each region and country, as applicable.

31. At the national level, various strategies have been prepared over the past two decades, including poverty reduction strategies and national sustainable development strategies, together with the establishment of related coordination and implementation bodies. In the post-2015 era, a revitalized process of formulating national sustainable development strategies through multi-stakeholder engagement can be expected to play a key role in the achievement of the universal development agenda.

32. A national sustainable development strategy has been defined as "a coordinated, participatory and iterative process of thoughts and actions to achieve economic, environmental and social objectives in a balanced and integrated manner".[2] In Agenda 21, world leaders called upon each country to develop a national sustainable development strategy. The Secretary-General's High-level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda has also recommended that countries should establish their targets for contributing to the post-2015 sustainable development goals through participatory planning processes at the national level (see A/67/890, annex). National sustainable development strategies can integrate the global targets and selected indicators that will apply to all countries, as well as establish and integrate the additional indicators to be set at the national level taking into account country circumstances and progress.

33. The Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat identified 106 countries implementing a national sustainable development strategy in 2009, based on reporting to the Commission on Sustainable Development. Through the

[2] See Department of Economic and Social Affairs, "Guidance in preparing a national sustainable development strategy: managing sustainable development in the new millennium", background paper No. 13, prepared for the second session of the Commission on Sustainable Development acting as the preparatory committee for the World Summit on Sustainable Development, 2002.

strategies, countries have identified priority actions that can deliver win-win outcomes in an integrated way for economic growth, employment creation, food security, access to essential services and climate change adaptation and mitigation, as well as broader environmental outcomes, such as biodiversity protection and conservation. Integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development was identified as a critical issue, along with the inclusion of all stakeholders and actors, coherent planning and decision-making at various levels, and implementation.

34. Policy integration can also be achieved through other overarching strategies guiding the various policies and through the way in which development plans and sectoral and other policies are designed and implemented. Integration should be sought from various avenues and at different levels, such as national and subnational, whenever feasible. In practice, strategic priorities will differ by country.

35. Supportive institutions are important for the implementation of national sustainable development strategies and integrated policies at the national level. Institutions need to promote the adoption of a holistic approach to achieving common targets and formulating policies that capture the interlinkages between sectors. Institutional structures may need to be reformed to support intersectoral cooperation and incentives will be needed for sectors to develop joint workplans towards common goals.

36. Several countries have taken steps to integrate policy by establishing national sustainable development commissions or similar bodies to advise the Government, review progress and promote public knowledge of, and support for, sustainable development in all its dimensions. Members often include multiple stakeholders, who can share their expertise to contribute to integrated policymaking. In some countries, a State planning commission or development commission is responsible for policy integration and integrated approaches.

37. Such integrated approaches include the "triple-win strategy", which seeks to achieve benefits across all three dimensions and serves to mainstream sustainable development into the policymaking process. Another example is the "nexus approach". The climate-land-energy-water-development nexus, for example, provides insights for policy integration targeting climate, land, energy and water and externalities on other sectors.

38. Several other instruments are available for policy integration, including laws and regulations, taxes and subsidies, and effective communication for promoting inclusive, integrated implementation. Given the complex interlinkages of contemporary development challenges, the assessment of impact, trade-offs and efficiency of policy tools is key to fostering resilience and knowledge creation about policy instruments that work. To leverage their impact, policy tools need be tailored to country-specific needs, circumstances and capacities.

39. In the post-2015 era, building national capacity is central for effective State ownership and the promotion of sustainable development. National statistical offices and planning agencies have a key role to play in providing the tools for the assessment of integrated policies at the national level. The United Nations development system can provide support through policy analysis, exchanges of a broad range of experiences on successful approaches to integration and capacity-building.

**Regional level**

40. At the regional level, the transition from the Millennium Development Goals to the sustainable development goals signals a much stronger role for regional entities, as reiterated in the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, entitled "The future we want". Their role needs to be seen in the light of the implementation of the agenda through cross-sectoral cooperation and by focusing on transboundary, regional and subregional solutions, the measurement of progress through regional monitoring facilities and encouraging and building on regional analysis.

41. Regional platforms, including through the convening powers of the regional commissions, could help countries to translate global goals into policies, guidelines, recommendations and standards that can be implemented at the national level, as well as mobilize partnerships and promote South-South and interregional cooperation. Regional platforms could also enable countries that face similar development challenges to share lessons learned from the implementation of integrated policy approaches.

42. Regional platforms could support integrated policies and approaches, facilitate the sharing of information, knowledge and experiences and strengthen capabilities. This is likely to lessen the burden of global-level requirements and can support policy integration and strengthen integration between global analysis and national efforts. The regional level is also the natural platform to tackle regional, subregional or transboundary integration challenges, which are important aspects of sustainable development.

**Global level**

43. At the global level, addressing the growing interconnectedness of development challenges and the need for integrated policy approaches will require strong policy cooperation and the coherent contributions of global institutions.

44. The proposed sustainable development goals and targets reflect the integrated nature of the current development challenges. Translating them into specific strategies, programmes and initiatives will require an effective global system for furthering policy coherence at the intergovernmental level and system-wide to set and prioritize objectives, coordinate policy and implementation and conduct follow-up and reviews. Member States have mandated that such reviews, to be carried out by the high-level political forum on sustainable development, should build on the lessons from the national voluntary presentations, held in the context of the annual ministerial reviews of the Economic and Social Council, as well as other relevant existing review mechanisms.

45. Global institutional elements for furthering policy coherence in the post-2015 era are already in place. The capacity of the various global institutions will be critical for policy coherence. Effective global support will also depend on the political will to strengthen integration through a shift in mindset at the global level. That shift will need to take the form of engaging in policy dialogue that cut across sectoral or political interests with input from a cross section of groups.

46. The need for policy integration underlines the importance of a global environment that allows a broad range of stakeholders, who may not necessarily be natural partners, to share information and create knowledge that can be leveraged

for policymaking. Research and academic institutions have a vital role to play in developing instruments for policy integration. International and national civil society groups will continue to play an important role in promoting sustainable development, and the private sector will have a growing role in financing and implementation.

## C. "Fit-for-purpose" United Nations development system

47. When the United Nations development system was first established, it was envisaged that development challenges would be primarily addressed at the sector level. The economic, social and environmental changes that accompanied globalization and the increased interconnectivity among countries were largely unforeseen.

48. In the post-2015 era, the United Nations development system will need to continuously adapt to support policy integration and coherence in the implementation of the new agenda. The transition to a unified and universal development agenda calls upon the system to encompass a broad range of issues relating to integration. Developing countries will require continued strong support at the country level. Other Member States will rely on the system primarily for tackling global challenges, coordination and the provision of norms and standards.

49. The United Nations system should use an integrated approach to capture synergies in programming and operations and should include a strong focus on partnerships with public and private actors. That approach is broader than that used in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals, in which the focus was placed mainly on setting goals and targets in the poorest countries and regions.

50. A universal agenda also means that the United Nations development system needs to identify means of engagement and implementation that allow it to have a universal and unified response to supporting policy integration and cooperation. The United Nations system will engage on integration with countries having a broad range of development experiences. The system's resource base will therefore need to be strengthened and diversified, with the introduction of new tools and technical capacity. The system will increasingly need to work as one, which will require it to develop a strong capacity for internal and external coordination. Several major initiatives, including "Delivering as one", are continuing.

51. Potential key functions of the United Nations development system in response to the integration requirements for the post-2015 development agenda and other key drivers of change include the following:

(a) Supporting better integrated and coordinated responses, at all levels, to national development challenges in a wide range of areas, including through United Nations intergovernmental bodies and inter-agency mechanisms;

(b) Conflict prevention, humanitarian assistance, recovery and resilience-building;

(c) Support for addressing the challenges of, and drawing benefits from, globalization;

(d) Strengthening country-level responses to global and transboundary challenges, such as the protection of biological diversity and the mitigation of and adaptation to climate change;

(e) Support in norm-setting and standard-setting, in particular with regard to the human rights-based approach to development, inequality, addressing systemic risks and supporting implementation at all levels;

(f) Support for enhancing North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation;

(g) Guidance on policy integration.

52. The range of functions provided by the United Nations development system can be expected to grow in response to the interconnected development environment and differentiated demands of countries and will require considerable capacity, flexibility and expertise. The diversity of the system and its ability to provide support in an integrated and coordinated manner are key assets.

53. The Economic and Social Council dialogue on the longer-term positioning of the United Nations development system offers Member States a platform for forging a common vision to ensure that the system is "fit for purpose" for the broadening of its functions in the post-2015 era.

# IV. Institutional requirements for the transition from the Millennium Development Goals to the sustainable development goals

## A. Role of institutions

54. One of the key transformative changes of the post-2015 development agenda will be how the capacities of institutions and systems are either adjusted or created anew to support the translation of the new agenda's vision into practical and actionable legislation, policies and programmes at all levels.

55. In his synthesis report (A/69/700), the Secretary-General underscored the urgent need to recognize and address the trust deficit between Governments, institutions and people. He also emphasized that providing an enabling environment to build inclusive and peaceful societies, ensuring social cohesion and respect for the rule of law would require the rebuilding of institutions at all levels. The need to fill institutional gaps by introducing the necessary legal and policy reforms that will mediate the transition from the Millennium Development Goals to the sustainable development goals and support implementation, follow-up and review is well recognized in proposed sustainable development goal 16.

56. This continues the recognition of the fundamental need for effective institutions in maintaining sustained growth and contributing to poverty eradication and sustainable development. Undertaking institutional reforms involves modifying procedures and norms that may have been entrenched and difficult to change without resistance. The structural changes that will be necessary are examined in the report of the Secretary-General for the 2015 thematic debate of the Economic and Social Council (E/2015/69).

57. Integrating the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development will require an integrated policy strategy or framework, such as a national sustainable development strategy, for all policymaking. While countries may not necessarily set up new centralized institutions or bodies to establish and oversee such a framework, an institutional structure that fosters coordination and integration will be necessary to ensure that the three dimensions are fully taken into account and integrated. This may require significant changes in institutional interactions and policymaking, as well as strong and focused institutional leadership.

58. Building effective institutions for sustainable development can be particularly challenging for conflict-affected countries. Once peace and stability are restored, making significant progress in poverty eradication and sustainable development requires restoring good governance and building the legitimate and effective institutions that are suitable to their specific contexts.

## B. Institutions in the transition to the sustainable development goals

59. Institutional adaptation will be necessary to deliver on the sustainable development goals. The changes should be introduced at multiple levels to enable the transition from the Millennium Development Goals to the sustainable development goals in such a way that the gains made from implementing the Millennium Development Goals are sustained and consolidated. They should also facilitate the effective and successful implementation of the sustainable development goals by fostering national and international policy integration, collaboration, and coherence; resolving conflict; minimizing implementation constraints; and influencing and shaping the behaviour, preferences, capacities and strategies of key actors.

60. Changing mindsets and attitudes is critical in the adaptation and change of institutions. While institutions guide the behaviour and practice of individuals, groups and countries at all levels, they are also a product of the efforts of people, Governments and other stakeholders. It will therefore take a significant shift in the mindsets and attitudes of development actors to modify and create new institutional frameworks to effectively drive the transition from the Millennium Development Goals to the sustainable development goals. It also requires accepting a new vision and the challenges of implementing it and bringing together all available resources, including tools and operational plans and programmes, to undertake such a shift. The task should be seen as a collective effort to be undertaken at all levels, with the involvement of all stakeholders.

61. The issue of leadership and human resource capacity is central. Institutions require visionary leaders and capable staff who will take the appropriate actions necessary to lead transformation and implement the new commitments, which are key conditions for achieving the vision of the sustainable development goals.

62. The task of strengthening or creating institutions and systems is often complicated by low capacity, in particular in terms of the human, technological and financial resources required to implement such changes. The transition from the Millennium Development Goals to the sustainable development goals will therefore require translating global aspirations and vision into well-resourced and practical regional, national and subnational priorities and programmes.

63. Appropriate legislation and policies may be needed to guide and support the mindset change that is required. In particular, public institutions responsible for managing the development process should be impartial and equipped with appropriate capacity and should function transparently. Those attributes could be enshrined in legislation and policy.

64. At the national level, institutional reforms must lead to outcomes that leave no one behind. Institutions must be accessible to all and respond to the needs of populations in both rural and urban areas. Legal reforms must aim to promote institutions and policies that provide access to justice and peaceful solutions. The rule of law must embed values, enable checks to the exercise of power, protect property rights, lower transaction costs and allow all citizens to own and make effective use of their assets.

65. A strong global cooperation and governance architecture, centred on the role of the United Nations in maintaining policy coherence, identifying new and emerging priorities and monitoring and tracking progress, is critical both for the realization of the Millennium Development Goals and for shaping an ambitious post-2015 development agenda. The transition from the Millennium Development Goals to the sustainable development goals demands a coherent and coordinated approach throughout the United Nations intergovernmental and inter-agency machinery.

66. This global development cooperation and governance system should also recognize that the United Nations operates in a broader context that includes other multilateral institutions and entities, regional development banks, as well as international, regional and bilateral trade and cooperation arrangements, all of which have different working methods. The interaction of this complex international institutional architecture contributes to tracking the achievement of development results.

67. The institutional requirements for creating synergies among public-private institutions to ensure integration and harmony in the support for delivering on a universal agenda have not yet been fully understood or determined. The Ebola crisis, for example, exposed fragilities in the institutional underpinnings of current structures, exposing a need to further develop national and international frameworks to foster sustainable and inclusive development in health systems. It showed a need to increase investment in strengthening African institutions.

68. At the regional and global levels, all relevant institutions will need to deepen their commitment to working more closely in support of country-led strategies and programmes and develop the capacity to work more flexibly in partnership with others in support of efforts to eradicate poverty and achieve sustainable development. For United Nations system organizations, this will mean partnerships both within and beyond the system and across a spectrum of issues, including economic, social, environmental, peace and security and human rights.

## V. Revitalized global partnership for sustainable development

69. In the transition from the Millennium Development Goals to the sustainable development goals, the global partnership for sustainable development will need to be strengthened both in scope and depth to meet the demands of the new,

transformational agenda. In his synthesis report, the Secretary-General recognizes that there is a need for a revitalized global partnership for development, built on the foundations of the United Nations Millennium Declaration, the Monterrey Consensus and the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (Johannesburg Plan of Implementation), to support the delivery of an ambitious new sustainable development goal-based agenda for sustainable development. That global partnership should be built on strong political will and action and involve national and international, as well as public and private, constituencies as core elements of a transformational approach.

70. In addition, the General Assembly, in its resolution 68/279, called for a single, comprehensive, holistic and forward-looking approach, based on the Monterrey Consensus and the Doha Declaration on Financing for Development: outcome document of the Follow-up International Conference on Financing for Development to Review the Implementation of the Monterrey Consensus (General Assembly resolution 63/239, annex), for addressing the financing needs across the three dimensions of sustainable development, in order to reinforce coherence, facilitate coordination and avoid duplication of efforts.

71. The issues under consideration in the continuing intergovernmental negotiations in both the third International Conference on Financing for Development and the post-2015 development agenda process can build on lessons from the experience with the global partnership for development. This includes Millennium Development Goal 8, which has focused attention on the degree to which commitments were being realized on aid, trade, debt relief, access to information and communications technology and essential medicines, and other forms of support.

72. The proposals under discussion include issues of development cooperation under national resource mobilization and official development assistance, as well as systemic issues in finance, investment, technology transfer, trade and the overall enabling environment in both developing and developed countries. A more effective means of follow-up and review of the global partnership is also under consideration. Agreement thereon will demonstrate a historically unprecedented level of ambition that will require the strongest political commitment from the international community.

73. The successful implementation of a transformative post-2015 development agenda hinges upon a revitalized global partnership for development and the means of implementation. Such a partnership should mobilize the engagement of all stakeholders and the required amount of resources needed — national and international, public and private, through aid and trade, regulation, taxation and investment — to support the implementation of the post-2015 development agenda. Such efforts should be based on strong political will, solidarity, cooperation and mutual accountability.

74. The interlinkages in the global partnership between the various levels will also need to be taken into account. For example, although most of the world's deforestation is occurring in developing countries, often in very low-income countries, it is taking place to a significant extent to meet the needs for timber and other forest products of developed and some large emerging economies. The responsibility for the protection of resources, such as forests, lies not only with the

countries in which they are located but also with the international community as a whole.

75. Given the ambition of the post-2015 development agenda to support the implementation of a set of goals that spreads across all three dimensions of sustainable development, and with the overarching goal of eradicating poverty in all its forms everywhere, the current approaches to financing for development and other means of implementation will need to be better aligned and more coherent. The alignment of approaches to financing and other means of implementation will be central to the coordination and coherent management of resources at all levels, and for advancing on systemic issues that are key to achieving the ambitious new agenda. This is necessary to reduce transaction costs and promote synergy and to make it easier to track commitments, achieve transparency and ensure integrated and effective approaches to sustainable development.

76. The emergence of many global funds during the Millennium Development Goals era, such as those addressing various global environmental issues, are a manifestation of the growing recognition of the necessity of global cooperation on the basis of the principles of solidarity and universality. The need for this type of global cooperation will be even more important for the achievement of the post-2015 development agenda.

## A. Multi-stakeholder partnerships: roles and responsibilities of partners

77. A clear distinction is now widely recognized in the analysis of partnerships: a revitalized global partnership for sustainable development and multi-stakeholder partnerships are complementary sides of an effective delivery support architecture for a poverty eradication and sustainable development agenda.

78. In the context of the transition from the Millennium Development Goals to the sustainable development goals, multi-stakeholder partnerships and engagement are seen as a key element of the transformative agenda. Their critical role notwithstanding, multi-stakeholder partners cannot replace the role, commitment and responsibility of Governments. Delivering on the ambitious, inclusive and universal post-2015 development agenda for all peoples and in all countries will be possible only with the involvement of all partners and stakeholders weaving together national, regional and global solutions to common development problems.

79. The resolve to develop strong voluntary partnerships with all development actors to contribute to solving global challenges derives from the United Nations Millennium Declaration and has been repeated at major United Nations conferences and summits, especially at the World Summit on Sustainable Development. This recognizes that the implementation of the mandates and goals set by the United Nations can best be achieved by leveraging catalytic partnerships with civil society, businesses, financial institutions, philanthropic foundations and academic and scientific institutions, as well as through full citizen involvement at the individual and group levels. Such partnerships will operate at the global, regional, national and subnational levels, including around issue-based coalitions.

80. In the transition to the sustainable development goals, it is important to clearly understand and define specific roles and responsibilities, as well as the conditions that are critical to building effective partnerships with all stakeholders. Some of the

partnerships will be global, others regional and yet others will be at the national and subnational levels, and involve citizens acting individually and in groups.

81. The role and responsibilities of stakeholders will vary. At the national and subnational levels, multi-stakeholder partnerships will be critical for implementation and service delivery. Such partnerships could be coordinated through national sustainable development strategies and around specific issues, such as employment, health care and energy, bringing together governmental bodies, civil society, the business sector and United Nations development agencies. Other roles include the provision of technical and scientific information and creating awareness as well as advocacy on issues of poverty eradication and sustainable development. They can also make invaluable contributions to dialogue and to the follow-up and review of all development endeavours at all levels.

82. Civil society has played a major role in the promotion and attainment of development, emphasizing different approaches. For example, civil society advocacy for civil rights, minority rights, social protection, gender equality, environmental protection and corporate responsibility has made significant contributions to the development of the concept of sustainable development and to the elaboration and implementation of sustainable development policies. Members of civil society create awareness and encourage individuals, communities, Governments and businesses to improve their disposition, performance and action. They are particularly important for advocating action on challenging or sensitive issues relating to human rights, poverty eradication, sustainable development, fairness and equality. They are also critically important in their representation of disadvantaged groups.

83. The business sector, including large companies and multinational enterprises operating in developing countries, should contribute to poverty eradication and sustainable development in the communities in which it operates and beyond. Firms can provide resources to support and implement initiatives, such as for education and health care. They can contribute economically through wages and taxes and can purchase local goods and services and provide technical and management assistance to suppliers in local enterprises.

84. Academic institutions, including educational and research institutions at all levels, are critical for providing research and scientific evidence for decision-making and action. They also play a vital role in educating the public on the principles and long-term benefits of sustainable development, on policies that have proven cost-effective in its promotion and on ways in which individuals and communities can contribute to the process.

85. Particular groups, such as indigenous peoples, should be consulted on projects that affect them and their ecosystem. Indigenous peoples generally have a special relationship to particular regions and ecosystems, and are often disproportionately poor. They are likely to be particularly affected by the unsustainable use and degradation of land, forest and water resources. Their special knowledge should be used in assessing the impacts of development activities and in developing policies to protect ecosystems and biodiversity and promote their well-being.

86. In the Millennium Development Goals era, civil society participated with the United Nations in multi-stakeholder partnerships, many of which were led by the Secretary-General, including the Every Woman, Every Child initiative, the

Sustainable Energy for All initiative, the Global Education First Initiative, the Zero Hunger Challenge initiative, the Scaling Up Nutrition movement and the Call to Action on Sanitation. Those initiatives are highly focused collections of voluntary partnerships involving Governments, multilateral and regional institutions, foundations, civil society organizations and for-profit enterprises, and serve to encourage multi-stakeholder collaboration on specific issues.

87. In the post-2015 era, innovative and entrepreneurial multi-stakeholder partnerships may evolve continuously as new issue-based or sector-based coalitions emerge to tackle new development challenges and offer new solutions. Stronger and more effective partnerships around issues, such as health, energy and water, or around groups, such as youth, women and indigenous peoples, among others, can be anticipated. In addition to advancing specific substantive objectives, they are also an integral part of the overall effort to respond to development challenges and provide solutions.

88. The continuing elaboration of the sustainable development goals and the post-2015 development agenda, including the means of implementation, has had an unprecedented level of participation of these stakeholders. It is also anticipated that they will play an important role in its follow-up and review.

## B. Policy and coordination issues relating to multi-stakeholder partnerships

89. The increasingly important role and responsibilities of multi-stakeholder partners, which are voluntary in nature, is generally not yet mediated by any formal arrangements but by flexible and non-binding provisions in many conference and summit outcome documents and similar legislation. Differences of opinion remain about the exact role and impact of their engagement and on whether the expectations about their contributions will be fully met. There are policy and guidance issues as well as legitimacy and governance issues regarding partnerships and multi-stakeholder engagement on which discussions must continue in order to better manage and tap into their full potential for the transition from the Millennium Development Goals to the sustainable development goals.

90. There are also concerns about the right balance in the assignment of roles and responsibilities to partners, while respecting the primary role of Governments. Those concerns will need to be discussed and addressed urgently, given that delivering on the transition from the Millennium Development Goals to the sustainable development goals will depend upon the active involvement of all partners and stakeholders.

91. For multi-stakeholders partnerships to assume and perform their anticipated roles and responsibilities, a minimum of factors will need to be in place, including:

(a) A fundamental change in mindset and attitudes recognizing the vital role of multi-stakeholder partnerships and the involvement of community-based constituencies in poverty eradication and sustainable development outcomes;

(b) A clear common vision and agenda to motivate coordinated and coherent action by all partners and stakeholders. It will be critical that the sustainable development goals and the integration of the three dimensions of sustainable

development become the shared vision and call to action that is accepted and understood in terms of its scope, ambition and impact;

(c) Clarity in the primary role and responsibility of Governments with regard to the roles and responsibilities of multi-stakeholder partners, with the aim of promoting synergy and complementarity and reconciling perceived conflicts of interest and purpose;

(d) Clarity about the comparative advantage and strengths of multi-stakeholder partners at all levels, taking into account that there will be power asymmetries, such as between business and civil society contributions, which should be harnessed for stronger and more effective results;

(e) The recognition that conflict-of-interest issues may still arise and that there is a need for dialogue to resolve them;

(f) Commitment to continuous learning, in recognition of the complexity of the transition from the Millennium Development Goals to the sustainable development goals and the intricacy of effective partnerships;

(g) A need, arising from all the above, to agree on ways and means to follow up on and review the contribution from multi-stakeholder partners, as well as to take into account their contributions in the overall follow-up and review of progress of the post-2015 development agenda.

92. The policy considerations above raise the question of where the coordination and coherence, as well as the learning and development, should take place in the policies and guidance necessary to maximize the impact of the contribution of multi-stakeholder partners. A new understanding and consensus needs to emerge on suitable arrangements for undertaking dialogue and developing policies and guidance on the roles and responsibilities of multi-stakeholder partners.

93. Currently, there is discussion and activity on these issues in many partnership forums and in some sectors, yet these remain voluntary and informal and are not necessarily linked to a common agenda or vision. These undertakings will need to conclude in time to contribute to the transition to the sustainable development goals and to support the effective implementation of the post-2015 development agenda.

## C. Partnerships for South-South and triangular development cooperation

94. The global cooperation landscape has undergone significant changes, and South-South cooperation has become increasingly important as many developing countries have become more economically powerful. South-South development partnerships in trade, foreign direct investment and technology flows and exchanges have increased considerably. Since 2008, for example, developing countries have exported more to one another than to developed countries.

95. International organizations, including United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, have been strengthening their support for South-South development partnerships and in many cases have formed triangular development partnerships involving developed countries. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, for example, has established a broad trust fund framework agreement with

China and works with African partners to scale up the impact of South-South cooperation on food security and nutrition.

96. Another example is the United Nations Environment Programme-China-Africa Cooperation on the Environment partnership, which provides technical support to African countries to scale up solutions that have proved successful in China, such as dryland agriculture and water treatment. Other examples include innovative and inclusive partnerships developed by the World Intellectual Property Organization to promote access to knowledge and technology in the context of South-South cooperation in the area of intellectual property.

97. The establishment of new institutions of South-South cooperation, such as the New Development Bank and the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, present new opportunities to finance investments in sustainable development.

## VI. Follow-up and review

98. The emerging post-2015 development agenda will be universal in its applicability and much broader than the Millennium Development Goals in its substantive scope, requiring a broader, participatory, multilayered follow-up and review of implementation. The international community has a unique opportunity to support a more streamlined review and follow-up process to advance and improve upon the implementation of the new development agenda.

99. At the 2005 World Summit, Heads of State and Government committed themselves to the timely and full realization of the Millennium Development Goals as well as the international development goals agreed at the major United Nations conferences and summits. The Economic and Social Council was entrusted with a number of new tools to pursue integrated follow-up and review, including the annual ministerial review.

100. Important insight can be drawn from the annual ministerial reviews of the Economic and Social Council since 2007. By embracing a broad vision of development, the reviews have deepened the integration of development issues, fostered a unified approach and advanced thematic coherence. They have drawn on a combination of global and regional reviews, thematic assessments and national voluntary presentations to deliver on the United Nations development agenda. The reviews at the global, regional and national levels have enabled the international community to focus on cross-sectoral areas, capturing critical issues for action emphasized in the outcomes of conferences and summits. They have served to develop an integrated policy framework for action at the national, regional and international levels.

101. Through the annual ministerial reviews, the Economic and Social Council has given sustained political and substantive significance to the integrated follow-up of conferences. The reviews have served to offer a comprehensive process that provides a full picture of overall progress in implementing the United Nations development agenda and to provide the basis for the formulation of policies that effectively cover interlinkages between the development goals.

## A. Multi-tiered follow-up and review of implementation

102. As the contours of the post-2015 development agenda have taken shape, discussions on follow-up and review are continuing within the context of the post-2015 negotiations. Exact arrangements for a future framework to support this will depend on the agreed agenda, including the financing and other means of implementation.

103. Discussions have emphasized the need for a voluntary, State-led, participatory, evidence-based and multi-tiered process to track progress. A universal review process constructed on those principles could be initiated at the national level and would inform the regional-level and global-level reviews. At all levels, follow-up and review discussions should be public, participatory, broadly accessible and based on data, scientific findings and evidence-based evaluations.

104. The universal agenda will require broad participation, which could be pursued through a multi-tiered review and follow-up of implementation at the national, regional and global levels. The follow-up would need to provide incentives to all actors to engage, take ownership of the agenda, mobilize action and stimulate mutual learning and constructive exchanges on how to make progress and necessary policy adjustments.

105. At the national level, global commitments will need to be translated into country-level commitments and actions, with specific targets to which all development partners can commit. To ensure inclusiveness and participation, the follow-up and review would need to be rooted in a decentralized, people-centred and bottom-up approach, driven by the national level, through which Governments are answerable to parliaments and people.

106. Parliaments, local governments and citizens have an integral role to play in promoting national follow-up and review and, by extension, implementation of the international development commitments. Follow-up and review of implementation would also need to connect national experiences to the regional and global levels. This would facilitate Member States and other actors to share insight and deliver on results in a unified and integrated manner.

107. Ultimately, the main focus of the follow-up and review would be to support the achievement of the development agenda at the country level. Many mechanisms already exist to review progress, and those mechanisms and efforts could be adapted to fit the new requirements of the post-2015 development agenda. This would require feedback from country efforts to the regional and global levels, and vice versa.

108. At the regional level, a multi-tiered follow-up and review should take into consideration the roles and mandates of regional institutions and entities. The United Nations regional commissions recently convened regional consultations on an accountability framework for post-2015. The consultations underscored that regional platforms could provide space for sharing national experiences on the implementation of the agenda.

109. The regional dimension could play a critical role because countries within regions share common experiences and challenges. A regional review and follow-up could be supportive of countries' efforts to deliver on development commitments.

The regional dimension could facilitate the sharing of knowledge and experiences and support coherent policies and approaches.

110. The regional level is also the natural platform for tackling regional challenges in sustainable development. The regional follow-up and review could help countries to translate global goals into policies, guidelines, recommendations and standards that could be implemented at the national level, as well as mobilize partnerships and South-South cooperation.

111. At the global level, follow-up and review will need to offer a comprehensive view of the state of implementation of the wide range of commitments for the post-2015 development agenda. The global framework would need to bring together elements from all levels and sectors regarding progress on specific goals, including on financing and the means of implementation, as well as encourage implementation and promote the sharing of lessons, data and information.

112. The post-2015 development agenda offers a unique opportunity to establish a coherent global follow-up and review framework that engages all stakeholders. To ensure coherence, interlinkages will need to be established. The framework would also need to support an integrated approach to poverty eradication and sustainable development, in its economic, social and environmental dimensions.

113. At all levels, effective use could be made of the existing mechanisms operated by organizations. Such mechanisms, especially at the regional level, may be best placed for drawing lessons from national implementation and bring together findings on progress on specific goals and targets. Existing multi-tiered follow-up and review mechanisms at all levels could be used. Mechanisms would need to be broad, flexible and built on the national level as the primary focus of both action and drawing lessons and insight.

114. To support follow-up and review, collecting good and reliable information and data will be important. Reviews rely on robust and high-quality data, which should be made available publicly, along with broad and inclusive information. There is a need to ensure that data are timely, reliable and sufficiently disaggregated. Good coverage and quality of data are essential. Disaggregated data at the national, regional and global levels and in terms of poverty characteristics will be critical for formulating effective and well-targeted policy responses. Technology could be used to make data more accessible.

115. Improvements in data quality and collection could provide information and evidence for the follow-up and review of implementation post-2015. There may be a need for increased transparency and open access to public data. Co-creation of data by various stakeholders could complement the official data collection and statistics. These priorities have already been reflected in the recommendations of the Secretary-General's Independent Expert Advisory Group on the Data Revolution for Sustainable Development.[3]

[3] "A world that counts: mobilizing the data revolution for sustainable development", November 2014. Available from www.undatarevolution.org/report/.

## B. Role of the United Nations

116. The United Nations has a critical role in supporting a unified follow-up and review at all levels. The review of the implementation of conference outcomes involves the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council system, including its functional, regional and expert bodies. As the highest intergovernmental policymaking organ of the United Nations, the Assembly will continue to fulfil a crucial role in providing high-level policy guidance that can serve to strengthen and sustain commitments towards the implementation of the individual conference outcomes and the post-2015 development agenda.

117. The Economic and Social Council and the high-level political forum on sustainable development, which is under the auspices of the General Assembly and the Council, will support the formulation of global integrated policymaking for the post-2015 development agenda.

118. The Economic and Social Council has a key role in achieving a balanced integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development at the global level. Its annual main theme provides the focus for the integration of analysis within the Council system, which supports intergovernmental integrated policy formulation. Every part of the Council system aligns, to the extent possible, its work to the main theme, and the analysis and policy recommendations inform the deliberations on the outcome of the high-level segment of the Council. Thus the Council serves as a unifying platform to consolidate the contributions and analysis of the Council system, as well as the United Nations development system, into integrated policy guidance.

119. The high-level political forum on sustainable development is designed to provide political leadership, guidance and recommendations for sustainable development, follow-up and review progress in the implementation of sustainable development commitments, and enhance the integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development in a holistic and cross-sectoral manner at all levels. In the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, entitled "The future we want", Heads of State mandated that the high-level political forum on sustainable development should conduct regular reviews of follow-up and progress in the implementation of sustainable development commitments and objectives, including those related to the means of implementation, within the context of the post-2015 development agenda. Those reviews, which will begin after the post-2015 development agenda has been adopted and replace the Economic and Social Council national voluntary presentations, will include developed and developing countries and the United Nations system entities.

120. The high-level political forum on sustainable development, when meeting under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council, has a thematic focus reflecting the integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development, in line with the thematic focus of the activities of the Council and consistent with the post-2015 development agenda. It also takes into account the work of the Development Cooperation Forum, as well as other activities of the Council relating to the integration and implementation of sustainable development. The high-level forum meets every four years at the level of Heads of State and Government, under the auspices of the General Assembly, and annually under the auspices of the Council for eight days, including a three-day ministerial segment.

121. The Economic and Social Council integration segment has been tasked with promoting the integration of the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development within the United Nations system and beyond. The segment serves as a platform for consolidating the input of Member States, the functional commissions and expert bodies of the Council, the United Nations system and other relevant stakeholders; promoting the balanced integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development by engaging policymakers from ministries; and bringing together the key messages from the Council system on the annual main theme of the Council and developing action-oriented recommendations for follow-up.

122. The integration segment addresses the interplay of the three dimensions of sustainable development as well as cross-cutting issues such as gender, science and technology, and trade and finance, especially in relation to policy options and their implications. The work of the segment can thus facilitate policy integration and the transmission and incorporation of policy guidance.

123. The Development Cooperation Forum of the Economic and Social Council serves as a key forum for the review of trends in international development cooperation. With its engagement of a wide range of stakeholders, the Forum could review the development cooperation aspects of a revitalized global partnership for development and successor arrangements for Millennium Development Goal 8. It can also continue to review national mutual accountability and transparency in development cooperation and promote policy coherence.

124. The Economic and Social Council system is an interlocking framework that connects functional and regional commissions, expert bodies and specialized agencies. All have clear distinctive yet interlinked roles and together will support the setting of new norms and standards applicable to all countries and the overall follow-up and review of implementation. The Council system could provide policy recommendations for the implementation by all countries of all sustainable development goals and targets.

125. The transition to the post-2015 development agenda will also demand adaptation and change for follow-up and review from the United Nations development system as a whole. The integration requirements of the post-2015 development agenda will also demand the United Nations development system to develop capacity to shift seamlessly between specialization and integration.

126. For the United Nations development system to be fit for supporting implementation, follow-up and review at the country level, there is a need for expertise, flexibility and agility in responding to the changing development context. This will require a significant strengthening of coordination capacity at both the inter-agency and intergovernmental levels.

127. Through the Economic and Social Council dialogue on the longer-term positioning of the United Nations development system, Member States have a platform to forge a common vision for the repositioning of the United Nations development system and renewing capacity for follow-up and review of implementation. The Secretary-General is expected to reflect the outcome of the Council dialogue in his report for the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of the General Assembly of operational activities of the United Nations system, to be held in late 2016.

# VII. Policy recommendations

128. The following policy recommendations for enhancing the transition from the Millennium Development Goals to the realization of the sustainable development goals and the broader post-2015 development agenda are submitted to the Economic and Social Council for its consideration.

**Pursuing policy integration for a unified development agenda**

129. Countries will need to review their various development strategies, policies and plans in order to ensure that they are adequately aligned with the post-2015 development agenda, when adopted.

130. The broadening of the post-2015 development agenda demands integrated policy responses to complex development challenges at the country and global levels and the growing systemic risks associated with the accelerating globalization and interconnectedness of countries. In response, countries need to deepen policy integration and cooperation at all levels.

131. Supportive institutions at all levels need to enable diverse actors to effectively align their efforts with the objectives of the post-2015 development agenda and the global partnership for sustainable development that will underpin it.

132. Greater awareness and understanding of the post-2015 agenda and the integrated approach that it requires needs to be achieved at all levels, through strong scientific analysis and a widespread and multisectoral communication effort.

133. Regional organizations, with the support of regional entities of the United Nations, should support the implementation of the post-2015 development agenda and the tracking of progress.

134. The Economic and Social Council system should promote policy integration and coherence in response to the need to eradicate poverty and promote sustainable development in the context of the post-2015 development agenda.

135. The United Nations development system needs to support countries' efforts to formulate and implement integrated policies through a broad range of forms of cooperation, with a strong focus on partnerships.

136. The United Nations system should be prepared to assist, at the request of Member States, in the assessment of existing mechanisms at the national level, such as national plans and reports, and their fitness for purpose for national planning and measuring the progress of sustainable development goals, and recommend principles and elements for a common approach to tailoring the global agenda to national circumstances.

137. Integration requirements of the post-2015 development agenda call for working methods at the national, regional and global levels that enable the United Nations system to allocate resources and share the knowledge of entities in an efficient manner and adjust programmes to focus on joint results achieved by a United Nations development system that is enabled to deliver results together.

138. The diversity of development needs and the implication of universality requires broad engagement by the United Nations system that responds to specific national contexts.

**Institutional requirements for the transition from the Millennium Development Goals to the sustainable development goals**

139. There is an urgent need to build trust among Governments, institutions and people by strengthening institutions at all levels so as to provide an enabling environment for building inclusive and peaceful societies.

140. Institutional arrangements should be dynamic and adapt to change whenever necessary in order to keep up with the new and emerging challenges of development as well as new approaches to tackling them. These arrangements should be country-specific and time-specific, and suit local circumstances.

141. At the national level, institutional reforms must lead to outcomes that leave no one behind, are accessible to all and address the needs of the population. This may require designating or instituting new national bodies to strategize, plan, follow-up and review implementation. To address low capacity, in particular in terms of the human, technological and financial resources required to strengthen or create institutions and systems, the transition from the Millennium Development Goals to the sustainable development goals will require translating global aspirations and vision into practical and adequately resourced national and subnational priorities and programmes.

142. A continued multilateral process, centred around the United Nations, of maintaining policy coherence, identifying new and emerging priorities, and following up on and reviewing progress is critical for delivering on an ambitious post-2015 development agenda.

**Revitalized global partnership for sustainable development**

143. The revitalized global partnership for sustainable development should be built on strong political will and action, and involve national and international, as well as public and private, constituencies as core elements of a transformational approach.

144. To further define, clarify and enhance the roles and responsibilities that multi-stakeholder partnerships should fulfil and the contributions that they should make in the transition from the Millennium Development Goals to the sustainable development goals:

(a) More analysis needs to be undertaken to understand and clarify the roles and responsibilities of multi-stakeholder partnerships at the national, regional and global levels;

(b) A review may be undertaken within existing resources of the existing mechanisms for coordinating the multi-stakeholder partners, with a view to drawing relevant lessons;

(c) There is a need for an agreed framework for the promotion, follow-up and review of the contribution of multi-stakeholder partnerships;

(d) The dialogue on multi-stakeholder partnerships should continue to be pursued in the Economic and Social Council, as well as in the high-level political forum on sustainable development under its auspices, among other existing partnership forums.

145. The contributions of South-South and triangular cooperation, including regional and subregional organizations, should be developed further in the transition

from the Millennium Development Goals to the sustainable development goals, including through the support of the United Nations and other international organizations, while recognizing that it is not a substitute for, but rather a complement to, the broader global partnership for sustainable development.

**Follow-up and review**

146. As Member States are deliberating upon a follow-up and review mechanism, the United Nations development system needs to ensure that it provides the data, information and analysis necessary to enable Member States to reach informed conclusions, recommendations and decisions.